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SUBJECT: DRC NOMINATES NORBERT NKULU, CLOSE
KABILA ADVISOR, AS AMBASSADOR TO RWANDA

¶1. (SBU) The head of the DRC's Ministry of Foreign Affairs International Organizations Directorate, Banza Ngoy Katume, confirmed July 6 media reports that Norbert Nkulu Mitumba Kilombo is the DRC Ambassador to Rwanda-designate.

¶2. (SBU) Nkulu, born December 15, 1946, graduated in law from Lovanium University (now Kinshasa University) in 1971. A member of the presidential party PPRD ("Parti du Peuple pour la Reconstruction et la Democratie" in French), he was President Kabila's Deputy Chief of Staff for governmental and judicial affairs from 2005-2006. He has been legal advisor to several Zairean/DRC state-run agencies (including the Post and Telecommunications Office and Presidency) and a lawyer at the national Appellate Court. He also defended the 2003-2006 transitional government at the DRC Supreme Court of Justice in 2006 when opposition challenger Jean-Pierre Bemba accused the Independent Electoral Commission of vote-rigging in Kabila's favor. He became a State Minister in the Office of the President ("Ministre d'Etat" in French - in the DRC a kind of super minister) in the Kabila administration following the 2006 elections.

¶3. (SBU) An ethnic Luba-Katanga from the Malemba-Nkulu territory of northern Katanga, Norbert Nkulu is married to Muyabo Nkulu, a former minister under Mobutu. He speaks French, Kiswahili, Lingala and Kiluba.

¶4. (SBU) Comment: Nkulu is a trusted member of the Luba-Katanga circle around Kabila, and as such can be expected to faithfully execute Kabila's policy towards Rwanda. His access to Kabila will lend credibility to his posting and should contribute to his accreditation as DRC ambassador in Kigali. Nkulu defended former transitional Vice President Abdoulaye Yerodia Ndombasi against claims that Yerodia issued anti-Tutsi statements in 1998, a fact which may be noted in Kigali but which, we conjecture, should not impede his accreditation by the Government of Rwanda. End Comment.

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